

The following guidance was developed to inform and provide direction to department staff and cooperating foresters in the implementation of the Weed Management Area- Private Forestry Grant Program (WMA-PFGP) within the existing Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP). The awarding of grants to Weed Management Areas is authorized under Wis. Stats. s. 26.38.

The Weed Management Area Private Forest Grant Program was created to establish procedures and standards for the administration of the private forest landowner grant program for Weed Management Areas (WMA), and to distribute other available state and federal funds through grants for the purpose of encouraging Weed Management Groups and Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) landowners to control invasive plant species on NIPF land in WMAs in a manner that benefits the state's forest and related resources and the people of the state. This draft guidance was developed by staff working on Forestry Invasive Plant issues and the program staff that implement WFLGP.

We are now soliciting comments from the public on this guidance. Once the 21 day notice period is complete, all comments will be considered, revisions will be made to the guidance documents as needed, and final guidance will be made available to internal and external stakeholders. Comments related to this draft guidance document should be sent to the Forestry Invasive Plants Coordinator – Thomas Boos at: thomas.boos@wisconsin.gov

Chapter 65

WEED MANAGEMENT AREA- PRIVATE FOREST GRANT PROGRAM

Chapter NR47 Subchapter XIII, Wis. Adm. Code

Purpose and Scope

This chapter provides technical specifications and guidelines for the Weed Management Area Private Forest Grant Program. For a specific practice, it provides parameters, technical requirements and specifications.

This chapter will be used by the Forestry Invasive Plant Coordinator and all Department of Natural Resources foresters and other delegated technicians in recommending and approving practices to be carried out by landowners for state funded cost sharing.

WEED MANAGEMENT AREA- PRIVATE FOREST GRANT PROGRAM

The Weed Management Area Private Forest Grant Program (WMA-PFGP) was created to establish procedures and standards for the administration of the private forest landowner grant program for Weed Management Areas (WMA), and to distribute other available state and federal funds through grants for the purpose of encouraging Weed Management Groups (WMG) and Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) landowners to control invasive plant species on NIPF land in WMAs in a manner that benefits the state's forest and related resources and the people of the state. The program allows qualified WMGs to be reimbursed up to 75% of the eligible cost of "Eligible Practices" (Practices).

Eligible Applicants

Applicants should be interested in good stewardship of natural resources and meet all of the following requirements to be eligible for a grant under the program:

- All Non-Industrial Private Forest lands of 500 acres or less are eligible for assistance under the program.
- A Weed Management Group (WMG) is eligible for assistance under the program if it consists of 3 or more persons of which at least one person shall be a Person Participating. A Person Participating is a person who owns 500 acres or less of Non-Industrial Private Forest land in the state on which a practice or portion of a practice under the grant will be implemented.
- Non-profit organizations and government entities may be applicants as long as the funding is used on NIPF. The non-profit organizations and government entities can be one of 3 persons participating and can apply if they are part of a WMG. The non-profit organization does not need to be a 501(c)3.
- Under s. NR 47.964(1)(c), Wis. Admin. Code, if federal funding, or non-profit organization funding, is used then eligibility may be defined in the agreement through which the funding is provided. Further, additional eligibility criteria may accompany state funding other than that provided through s. 20.370 (5) (av), Wis. Stats.
- The department will review applications to determine if the practice is needed and feasible, that there is evidence of at least one Participation Agreement (interested parties in the WMG) at the time of application, meaning that there is a Person Participating who owns 500 acres or less of NIPF land. The department will ask for the Participation Agreement in the application.
- The applicant may be different than the responsible party.
- The applicant may be the Person Participating.

Participation Agreement [see Appendix C]

For Practices on NIPF land, the WMG must submit a Participation Agreement with the application that includes:

- The NIPF landowner as a Person Participating.
- Contact information for the NIPF landowner.
- The location of the NIPF land.
- Advanced written permission by the NIPF landowner for the WMG to enter and conduct practices on NIPF land.
- Advanced written permission by the NIPF landowner to allow WMG to share contact information with the department.

If the NIPF landowners are not known at the time of application, they must be added to the Participation Agreement before the WMG conducts a Practice.

The Participation Agreement must be revised if new NIPF landowners or lands are included in a Practice for which the WMG requests reimbursement. The revised Participation Agreement must be submitted along with the interim report or any request for reimbursement.

If one of the properties is owned by a private landowner, and the state or federal government has an easement, this will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. However, if the landowner meets the definition of private, it should be acceptable.

Rapid Response Funding

Up to 20% of the WMA-PFGP funds will be designated annually for the rapid response to early detection species upon discovery, but may change based on knowledge gained throughout the year. Rapid response practice means a practice to control or eradicate "prohibited" invasive plants listed in s. NR40, Wis. Admin. Code and early detection species, those invasive plants new to the state or to a region of the state as determined by the Forestry Invasive Plant Coordinator (FIPC).

Applications for rapid response practices can be applied for at any time. If appropriate, applications submitted for rapid response funding may receive immediate approval and will not be required to wait until the April 1st deadline for funding. As species may be detected and reported by anyone, the FIPC will coordinate the distribution of the funding based on the species and the feasibility of control. Any remaining rapid response funds at the end of the first state fiscal year will be returned to the general WMA-PFGP fund for the second fiscal year. Remaining funds in the second fiscal year will be awarded to non-early detection applications after the April 1st application date and has to be encumbered by the Department Bureau of Finance deadline (early May). At the end of the biennium, the rapid response funds will be incorporated into the WMA-PFGP fund as to not lapse the funding.

Rapid response funding does not require match.

Applications

Applications can be obtained from the Department of Natural Resources Forestry Invasive Plant Coordinator, P.O. 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921 and on line at <http://dnr.wi.gov/> keyword: WMA-PFGP

Applications may be sent in any time with a deadline of April 1 unless otherwise provided on the application form and is contingent upon availability of funds. It is best to submit an application well ahead of the date the practice is planned to be conducted. Applications for rapid response practices can be applied for at any time.

The FIPC will announce (call for applications) if more money is available after funds have been dispersed from the April 1 deadline.

The FIPC should make basic eligibility determinations upon receipt of an application, including whether the applicant includes a "Person Participating" that meets non-industrial private forest land ownership criteria. The FIPC determines the amount awarded to each applicant.

The department should review applications to determine practice eligibility, based on all of the following:

- a) The practice is needed and feasible. The FIPC has the right to not fund projects based on feasibility.
- b) The practice is eligible under this subchapter.
- c) The practice cost is determined to be at least \$200 or more.

A WMG may only apply once per year, unless the FIPC makes a second call for applications. A WMG may apply any number of times per year for a rapid response practice.

How to fill out an application

Each new application must be accompanied by a Substitute W-9, even if the applicant has previously completed a W-9 for another application.

- The WMG completes page 1 and Table 1 on page 2 (including a project cost estimate itemized by practice and a needs determination statement) of the application, signs the application and completes a Substitute W-9 form.
- There must be documentation proving they are a WMG.
- It must include a Participation Agreement if applicable.
- Attach a project summary, including any supporting documents.
- The FIPC reviews Table 1 and may change it prior to the award and signature of approval.

The applicant (WMG) has to identify a responsible party who will receive a 1099, which means they have to have a tax ID number. The responsible party can be changed before the payment is made, by submitting a new W-9.

Applications, except those for rapid response projects, are due by April 1 for consideration for grants to be awarded in the upcoming (next) fiscal year. All applications received by April 1 will be reviewed together. If an application is incomplete, it will be returned. The deadline for returning complete and corrected applications is May 15. Grants will be awarded as soon after July 1 (beginning of the fiscal year) as possible.

Applications for rapid response projects can be submitted at any time. They will be reviewed immediately. If approved and rapid response funding is still available the grant will be awarded.

The grant cycle for all grants is 24 months.

Eligible Practices

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Forestry Invasive Plant Coordinator (FIPC) for guidance prior to completing the application. Applications will be funded on the basis of priority.

The following practices are eligible for cost sharing:

- 1) Education, information and outreach including but not limited to: publications, field days, websites, demonstrations, trainings, and planning workshops. This is broader than a project on NIPF land, but a component of the project must include NIPF land.
- 2) Coordinating a Weed Management Group, this includes one-time start-up costs, and assisting a WMG in the formation of partnerships, goals, and objectives for the management of the WMA, and a WMG coordinator salary for up to one grant cycle. This is broader than a project on NIPF land, but a component of the project must include NIPF land.
- 3) Inventory of invasive plant species occurrences including surveying and mapping using methods approved by the department and described in the application.
Note: Inventory is an extensive point-in-time effort to determine the location of invasive plants, including the presence, distribution, and status of plants, and abiotic components such as water, soils, landforms, and climate. Inventories may involve both the compilation of existing information and the acquisition of new information.
- 4) Control of invasive plant species that impact Non-industrial Private Forest land. This only applies to plants that impact forests, but could include plant species growing adjacent to non-forested areas, that have the potential to impact the forest, with consideration of lands adjacent to the project proposal.
Revegetation of the site after control is an acceptable practice if the applicant can justify the need to decrease competition and further invasion.
- 5) Monitoring includes post-activity assessment and documentation of management activity results using methods approved by the department and described in the application.
Note: Monitoring differs from inventory in adding the dimension of time, and the general purpose of monitoring is to detect changes or trends in a resource. It includes the collection and analysis of repeated observations or measurements to evaluate changes in condition and progress toward meeting a management objective. Monitoring is often done by sampling the same sites over time, and these sites may be a subset of the sites sampled for the initial inventory. Natural resource monitoring is conducted primarily for two purposes: (1) to detect significant changes in resource abundance, condition, population structure, or ecological processes; or (2) to evaluate the effects of some management action on population or community dynamics or ecological processes. Monitoring should have a specific purpose.
- 6) Practices under s. NR 47.84(2)(b), Wis. Admin. Code if they pertain to management of invasive plants that impact forests, including:
 - a) Reforestation and afforestation which includes establishment or reestablishment of diverse stands of native forest trees through natural regeneration, planting or direct seeding for conservation purposes and sustainable timber production.
 - b) Forest improvement which includes practices to increase tree growth, tree quality, biological diversity, tree vigor and forest health.
 - c) Soil and water protection and improvement which includes the maintenance or improvement of water quality and soil productivity, and the reduction of erosion on forest and related land.
 - d) Wetland and riparian protection and improvement which includes the management, protection, and improvement of wetlands and riparian areas to maintain water quality, protect and improve wetlands and riparian areas, reduce sedimentation and enhance or improve fish or wildlife species.
 - e) Terrestrial wildlife and habitat enhancement which includes the establishment, management and enhancement of permanent habitat for game and nongame wildlife species.
 - f) Forest historic cultural and archeological site protection.
 - g) Endangered, threatened or rare natural resource protection, management, restoration and enhancement targeted at threatened or endangered species habitat maintenance or enhancement, and management of significant natural communities or rare native vegetation.
- 7) Long term invasive plant management plan development. This is broader than a project on NIPF land, but a component of the project must include NIPF land.

Costs

Eligible Costs

(a) Grants under the program shall be used to distribute available state, federal or non-profit funds for the purpose of encouraging invasive plant management in Weed Management Areas.

(b) Eligible costs are all those identified in an application under s. NR 47.966 (3), Wis. Admin. Code and associated with the preparation or implementation of one or more Practices as approved by the FIPC.

Eligible costs can be incurred by any member of the WMG.

- 1) Documented Reasonable Costs: Costs associated with implementing approved practices as described in application or approved by the FIPC.
- 2) Labor Costs: In general, \$15/hr is used for landowner, applicant or volunteer labor (if used as in-kind match). Rates may vary for more skilled labor such as heavy equipment operation. Landowner and volunteer labor may not be as cost-effective as professional labor and should not be funded at that higher rate.
- 3) Equipment and Space Rental: Actual rental costs for necessary equipment or comparable rate if applicant is using their own equipment. It also includes rental of space including equipment storage and meeting facilities. Farm equipment rates are often available by county from the local FSA office.
- 4) Capital Purchases: Purchase of equipment and supplies, such as chainsaws, sprayers, herbicide, fuel to operate equipment, etc. with a cap \$5,000.

Ineligible Costs

- 1) Costs incurred before an application for grant assistance is awarded (money is set aside/encumbered).
- 2) Mandatory Practices- The implementation of any practice already required or mandated by law, rule, regulation or other authority. This does not apply to a practice required in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program (under ch. 77, Stats.), and a practice required under ch. NR 40, Wis. Admin. Code, for prohibited and restricted terrestrial plant species. Other examples include practices for wetland mitigation or disposal site clean-up.
- 3) A practice not approved by the department in writing, or changes to a previously approved practice, unless authorized by the department in writing.
- 4) Costs associated with fixing, repairing or redoing a cost-shared practice damaged or lost because of poor practice implementation or inadequate protection.
- 5) Costs associated with work on public lands.
- 6) Costs associated with work on industrial forests.
- 7) Costs in excess of \$5,000 for equipment purchase.
- 8) Costs associated with traveling to and from the site.
- 9) Costs associated with work on aquatic plant species.
- 10) Costs associated with work on NIPF land without permission or agreement.
- 11) Purchase of property and associated fees and costs.
- 12) Costs already being paid for or reimbursed by another program.
- 13) Costs associated with maintaining a practice the landowner has agreed to maintain under another program.

Limitations

- 1) A grant under the program may not exceed \$15,000 (the amount to be reimbursed) to any WMG, excluding a rapid response practice.
- 2) The WMG cannot combine cost sharing from state and federal sources to exceed the entire cost of the project. See s. 26.38 (2m) (b), Wis. Stats.
- 3) Cost share reimbursement may not exceed 75% of the approved, actual eligible costs and may be less than 75%.
- 4) The minimum cost for a practice is \$200 per applicant per year and this is the total cost, including the match.
- 5) Applications must be approved by the FIPC before being awarded funding.
- 6) The WMG cannot begin a practice before they receive written approval from the department, or they become ineligible for funding.
- 7) Cost sharing will not be approved for commercial practices. A commercial practice is something where the applicant is paid for the project approved under the grant.

Approval process (Grant Selection System):

The department shall give preference to projects which include the following:

- 1) Rapid response practices.
- 2) Practices that accomplish objectives or groups of objectives identified below (not in order of priority):
 - (a) Work on the control of prohibited invasive plant species as identified in ch. NR 40, Wis. Admin. Code.
 - (b) Work on the control of invasive plant species.

- (c) Non-industrial private forest land not heavily infested with invasive plant species.
- (d) Non-industrial private forest land where invasive plant species identified in the application may be contained or eradicated.
- (e) Long term management plan (LTMP) use or development.
- (f) A WMA includes more than the land owned by one Person Participating.

An LTMP is beneficial for a WMG as applications are more likely to be funded if a LTMP is in place for a WMA.

Eligible applications shall be approved, provided grant funds are available. Department approval of an application constitutes an agreement between the state and the WMG. Partial funding for eligible applications may be provided.

Upon approval of an application, the applicant should be notified in writing by the FIPC. Grant awards should be determined by the department based on eligibility and practice preference. The department should determine the award date within the fiscal year.

FIPC can approve a portion of any request, or decrease the amount of a request per practice.

Internal Process Steps:

- 1) Application deadline is April 1.
- 2) April 1 - July 1- FIPC reviews applications, approves those that are needed and feasible, sends initial letter to applicant stating available funds and the applicant will be awarded after the following fiscal year. FIPC will work through any issues with applicant if needed.
- 3) April 1 - July 1- Submit approved applications to Bureau of Community Financial Assistance to encumber funds, process grant, etc. as soon as award letter is sent.
- 4) July 1 (or any time there after) - issue Award letter (grant)

NOTE: If there is extra funding (slippage dollars) from FY1 of the biennium, it rolls over to FY2 to be awarded on July 1. For FY2, extra funds must be encumbered by May 1st. (Therefore, for slippage dollars, awards can be given out at any time before May 1st.)

Grant Calculation

- The matching grant shall be no more than 75% of the actual calculated eligible costs depending on the availability of funds, unless it is work on prohibited or early detection species.
- A grant or portion of a grant awarded for work on prohibited species or early detection species may be up to 100% of the actual eligible costs depending on the availability of funds.
- Any individual, ownership or project may not receive grants exceeding a total of \$15,000 annually, excluding a rapid response practice.
- All other funding source restrictions must be addressed if applicable. If a federal or non-profit organization grant agreement provides for cost-share limitations different from those specified in this subsection, the cost-share rate from funds provided through the federal or non-profit organization grant agreement may apply.

Match criteria:

In-kind match includes services, supplies, time (salary and fringe for non-state government employees), equipment, and cash. It also includes other grants with similar purpose for forested landscapes (not to match with other ch. 47 subchapters VII and XIII funding).

The WMG is required to provide proof of payment for money spent and in-kind match. Proof of payment includes: invoices marked paid, canceled checks, credit card statements, volunteer time logs, etc.

State funding and state employee time is not eligible as match. [See NR47.966(1)]

Federal funds can be used as match as long as they do not exceed the total amount of the project.

FIPC should include in the award letter that the WMG should keep all award documents for three years.

Example: Total project cost = \$20,000, the grant awarded = \$15,000, the WMG match is \$5000.

Grant Application and Approval

Applications for rapid response practices can be submitted at any time-

Applicants should send their applications and a completed Substitute W-9 form to the FIPC, postmarked no later than April 1, to qualify for an award for the following fiscal year.

If the application or Substitute W-9 forms are in any way incomplete, the application will be returned to the applicant. The application will not be considered until it is completed correctly. The deadline for returning complete and corrected applications is May 15.

The WMG must have a willing person or organization submit the W9, and should take into account the tax implications associated with this.

The FIPC will ensure money is encumbered for the project and notify the WMG with an award letter indicating the project may be started, the grant amount, the grant number, the project completion deadline (which is 24 months after they were approved by the Division of Forestry), and a form for tracking expenses and reporting needs. A copy of the award letter will be sent to the local department Forester (may be multiple). If an application has not been awarded funding at that time, WMGs will need to submit another application. In this event, WMGs will be notified, by letter from the FIPC, of their need to reapply.

Practice Completion and Extensions

The WMG should complete the approved practice within 24 months of the grant award. However, if a practice is not completed in the specified time due to conditions beyond the WMG's control, the department may grant an extension up to one year. Extension requests must include the WMA-PFGP grant number and should be e-mailed or sent in writing to the FIPC in Madison.

When the WMG has completed all or a portion of the project, the WMG must contact the FIPC and submit any bills, receipts and/or expense worksheets showing that they have incurred the cost of the project as well as any other documentation that pertains to the project for the FIPC review and records. The FIPC or department Forester will visit the site to verify completion.

Reporting

The FIPC will provide a report form to the WMG based on the project along with the award letter. An interim report should be provided half way through the project. This will be noted in the award letter. The WMG should provide a report with the following details:

Outreach/education:

- Target audience, materials developed (provide), number of people contacted
- Workshops/events: number of people, content, location, agendas
- Specific outcomes
- Future needs

Coordination:

- Who is involved, kinds of organizations
- Did you set up an LLC or non-profit, etc.?
- Goals and objectives for group
- Planned actions
- Specific outcomes

Inventory:

- Landowner information, location, contact info, coordinates?
- Plant species of concern (Note abundance and distribution)
- Provide maps or location information for targeted species
- Method of inventory (meander, high use areas, drive-by, etc.)

Control:

- Landowner information, location, contact info, coordinates?

- Plant species of concern- (Note abundance and , distribution)
- Plant species controlled
- Acres or square footage treated
- Type of control method(s)
- Type of herbicide(s) and rate
- Time(s) of year of control
- Level of success

Monitoring:

- Outcome
- Future needs, including control, additional properties to be included in control (example: 12 properties have plant x, but can only gain access to 10)
- Level of success of control
- Is the goal of control being met? What is the management goal? (i.e., tree regeneration, community restoration, rare species, etc.)

Miscellaneous practices:

- Depends on the project narrative of proposed miscellaneous practice.

Management plan development:

- Provide the plan to FIPC.

Grant Payment to Weed Management Group

The FIPC or department Forester is required to certify the practice is complete or partially complete, by reviewing the records submitted and, if necessary, conducting a field inspection of the project before any payment may be made. When such completion has been certified by the FIPC or department Forester, the FIPC will then determine a partial or final payment amount to request for the WMG. The FIPC or department Forester is asked to complete the project accomplishment section on page 2 of the WMA-PFGP form, including a partial or final payment amount request, and sign and date the Certification of Completion at the bottom of the form.

Proof of payment and department approval of completed practices is required before reimbursement payment can be released. This proof could include receipts, paid invoices, canceled checks, work logs for in-kind labor, etc.

Requirements for Proper Completion of a Payment Request by FIPC

The FIPC will complete the project accomplishment section on page 2 of the WMA-PFGP form.

Payment requests must include the WMA-PFGP grant number on page 2 of the WMA-PFGP form. This grant number is issued by the FIPC at the time of funding award and indicated at the upper-right corner of the landowner award letter. The completed activities and the payment requested sections *must* be completed for each practice for which reimbursement is being requested.

Payment requests must be submitted on the payment request form (page 2 of application) (i.e., form should only contain cost figures for expenses relating to the current payment request, not expenses from a previous partial payment). Certification of Completion must be signed and dated by the FIPC at the bottom of the form. On the Certification of Completion signature line, indicate whether the payment request is for “partial payment” or “final payment” (see partial payment option section below).

The FIPC will send a copy to WMA-PFGP grant manager (Bureau of Community Financial Assistance), as they require a copy of the WMG’s signature (page 1) in order to complete payment.

The department’s record retention policy requires FIPC to retain records of all pertinent information within the WMG file for at least 10 years after final payment is made.

The WMG shall submit evidence of the Participation Agreement for each Person Participating, including express permission for the WMG to enter upon land of Person Participating. [See s. NR 47.967 (7), Wis. Admin. Code]

Partial Payment Option

No partial payments will be available for grants of less than \$1,000. For grants of \$1,000 or greater, the WMG has the option to request one partial payment before completion of the entire project. No more than 2 payments may be requested by a WMG for grants of \$1,000 or greater (i.e., one partial and one final payment). If a partial payment is requested, the FIPC will process the payment request in the same manner as a final payment request, but will need to check the “partial payment” checkbox on the “Certification of Completion” signature line when submitting the partial payment request. The FIPC should retain a clean, unsigned copy of the payment request form for submission of the final payment request.

Grant Cancellation

Applicants may opt to cancel their pending grant application at any time. However, they should inform the FIPC in writing, as soon as possible. WMGs whose applications have already been approved for funding may also withdraw from the program if they are unable or unwilling to complete their WMA-PFGP project. For these WMGs, it is critical they request the FIPC to cancel their grant immediately. This will allow the FIPC adequate time to reassign the allotted money to another applicant before the end of the biennium. Unused funds from grants canceled after this time cannot be transferred to new applicants and are lost from the program. Therefore it is important that FIPC remain in close contact with WMG undertaking WMA-PFGP projects. This communication will also help insure that unsuccessful WMA-PFGP projects are canceled out and the allotted funding re-appropriated to another WMG in a timely manner.

Verbal cancellation requests are not sufficient to authorize closure of either pending or approved grant applications. The FIPC should include the WMGs name, project number, and the grant amount in their cancellation notification. The FIPC will then issue the WMG a letter notifying them of their grant’s cancellation once the cancellation process has been completed.

APPENDIX A

WMA-PFGP Frequently Asked Questions

General Application

- 1) How much total money is available annually through this program?
– Each fiscal year will allocate \$60,000.
- 2) Does the CWMA need a formally signed agreement or MOU?
– No, it is encouraged but not necessary; however, it creates a more competitive project.
- 3) If the program proposal is to fund a staff member, what pay rate do we use?
– The salary/pay rate is based on the individual organizations pay rate. \$15/hour is the standard volunteer labor rate, skilled labor or contract work may be higher.
- 4) Can you apply for several practices in one grant cycle?
– Yes, multiple practices are eligible as long as completion of them all within the designated timeframe is feasible.
- 5) Do proposed projects need to include on-the-ground invasive species control work?
– No. Applications proposing starting a CWMA are eligible; including all associated start-up costs, meetings, education and materials (travel expenses are NOT eligible).

Applicants (Weed Management Group)

- 1) Who can serve as the responsible party?
– State employees are not able to serve as the responsible party, but any other individuals or groups can. Responsible parties are responsible for tax implications and must submit a W-9 for payment.
- 2) Can public agencies or units of government be part of the Weed Management Area (WMA)?
– Yes. That is encouraged.
- 3) Can public agencies or units of government have work done on their land with WMA grant funds?
– No.
- 4) Can work done on public lands be a match for the WMA grant?
– No.
- 5) Is a “Person Participating” needed even if the practices are not “on the ground” work?
– Yes.
- 6) Can the applicant be an organization outside of Wisconsin as long as the work will be conducted in Wisconsin?
– Probably, but it may depend on the situation.
- 7) Do we need to know all the properties and species we will be working on at the time of application?
– No. At the time of application you only have to have one landowner on whose property work will be done; however, you should know the major target species and their relative abundance in the area to be worked on. At the time of the interim report, all private landowners need to be identified.

Eligible Lands

- 1) If an organization, such as a land trust, owns >500 acres, are they eligible to be a part of the WMA?
– Yes, anyone may be a member of the WMA.
- 2) If an organization, such as a land trust, owns >500 acres, are they eligible to have work done on their land (eg, be a “Person Participating”)?
– Maybe. If they own multiple parcels and the work being done is on non-industrial private forest land parcels of <500 acres, then those parcels are eligible.
- 3) Can a landowner with multiple parcels <500 acres, but with a total land ownership exceeding 500 acres, qualify if the practice is carried out on a parcel <500?
– No, an individual’s entire land ownership, under the same name, must not exceed 500 acres to qualify.

Eligible Practices

- 1) Can the grant cover overhead for the organization that is the grant recipient?
– Maybe. Since overhead is not an acceptable practice, it should not be listed separately. Instead it should be included in the total requested by practice. It can be referenced in the proposal narrative.
- 2) Can contractors be hired for invasive species control work?
– Yes, that is an eligible practice to be reimbursed.
- 3) Does match composed of members participating in education and outreach for the WMG qualify?
– Yes, as long as it is not a state employee and the work is associated with terrestrial forest plants. Works on aquatic invasive programs are not eligible for match.
- 4) Can WMG Coordinators focus on all lands within the identified WMA, not just non-industrial forest land?
– Yes, as long as the work is for terrestrial invasive plants that impact forests and the activity is clearly explained in the application, e.g. inventory. However, portions of the work must be on NIPF.
- 5) Can aquatic invasive species projects be funded if not all the money is used up?
– No.
- 6) Are wetland invasive plant species practices eligible under this program?
– Depends on the habitat; only if the species are growing in or threatening a forest.
- 7) Are projects for control work in roadside ditches bordering private forest land eligible?
– Depends on the species and threat of the infestation.

Reimbursement

- 1) When can the money start to be used?
– Once you have received your award letter it will give you a start and finish date.
- 2) How does the reimbursement process work?
– Funds will be reimbursed after work is partially and /or completely finished. Applicants will submit a request for reimbursement along with an interim or final report and receipts. Applicants may receive up to one partial reimbursement along with the final reimbursement.

3) If I submit my W9, will I be responsible for all the tax liability from receiving this grant?

– Yes.

4) If we don't have a non-profit or agency to be the applicant, how do we avoid having one person accept all of the tax liability?

– At the time of application, you must submit a W9. This can be revised up to the point of reimbursement by submitting a new W9. Creating a Limited Liability Corporation may be a good option.

<http://www.wisconsin.gov/state/byb/LLcompany.html>

<http://info.legalzoom.com/create-llc-wisconsin-3442.html>

5) If there are multiple landowners involved in the project, do each submit a W-9?

– Only one W-9 is needed to start the process, submitted with the participation agreement. A W-9 is required to receive payment; therefore, all will need to be submitted when payments are to be made. However, the group may submit a different W-9 at the time of request for payment.

Project Evaluation

1) How will proposals be evaluated?

- a. Is the group eligible? If there are 3 separate persons and one is a Person Participating.
- b. Is the project area eligible? Is the land being worked on private non-industrial forest land in Wisconsin?
- c. Does the proposed project meet the acceptable practices?
- d. Is there a 25% match available?
- e. Is the application complete?
 - A completed and signed proposal
 - A project narrative
 - A completed and signed W9 form
 - A participation agreement signed by the WMG and at least one landowner who will be participating
- f. Is the proposal for rapid response? If so, this will be competing for a separate pot of money and does not have an application deadline.

2) What are high priorities for the program? (not in priority order)

- a. To assist new or existing WMGs/CWMAs get organized and underway, to the point that they can be self-supporting and know how to seek other funding.
- b. To inventory, contain and monitor for early detection species.
- c. To inventory, contain and monitor populations of invasive plants in high quality forests that will be regularly managed over a long time.
- d. To keep invasive plants out of private lands that are being managed in conjunction with nearby public lands.
- e. Sites with easements, natural area designation or other commitment to long term management of the invasives.
- f. Projects that result in broad outreach to forest landowners and others.
- g. Projects that create or implement long range management plans with the WMA.

3) What kind of projects will receive low priority?

- a. Projects that control invasive plants that are widespread or abundant in the area.
- b. Projects that will work on a few selected parcels in the midst of other unmanaged parcels.

- c. Projects that will do control for one or two years with no or little likelihood of long-term follow-through.
- d. Proposals that appear to not have been carefully planned by a group of partners who will be involved.
- e. Proposals that appear to be focused on lands owned by the applicant or only a few WMG members.

APPENDIX B- Tips on Proper Completion of the Substitute W-9 Form for Landowners

It is imperative that W-9 forms be filled out correctly by the landowner since this will determine how the cost-sharing moneys are considered by the IRS for tax purposes. Landowners should be advised to read the accompanying instructions carefully before completing a W-9.

- The landowner must fill in their tax identification number (TIN) and check the appropriate box underneath to indicate whether this number represents a social security number (SSN), employer identification number (EIN), etc.
- Social security numbers should only be used in the TIN field when you are applying as an individual, sole proprietor, or LLC-Single Owner.
- If the landowner is applying as a legally recognized partnership, corporation, company, etc., then they must provide the corresponding EIN in the TIN field.
- The applicant's TIN must match that of the entity they specified in the Legal Name field of the W9 form.
- If the landowner is not considered a legal partnership, corporation, etc. with a federally recognized EIN but the property involved is jointly owned, then the entity designation on the W-9 form must be designated as an Individual/Sole Proprietor.
- Only one individual's name and TIN may be written on the W-9.
- Property jointly owned by a married couple is eligible for cost sharing, but only one co-owner's name may appear on the W-9
- Either co-owner may apply for cost sharing, but it is important that one co-owner's name be used consistently on both the WFLGP Application (Form 2400-126) and the W-9 form.

APPENDIX C- Participation Agreement

State of Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921, FR/4
Madison, WI 53707-7921

**Weed Management Area
Forest Grant Program-
Participation Agreement**

For Form 2400-141 (R 4/13)

THIS “Weed Management Area Private Forest Grant Program Participation Agreement” (Agreement) is entered into by and between the _____ (Weed Management Group) and the undersigned Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowners (Landowners).

I. Purpose. Invasive species have significant environmental, social, and economic impacts on natural areas. They can harm ecosystems through competition, suppression, and displacement of native species and through the alteration of ecosystem functions such as nutrient cycling and hydrology. It is important to recognize that most non-native plants (i.e., species that have been introduced to an area where they do not naturally occur) are not invasive.

Effectively dealing with the problem of invasive plant species presents a significant conservation challenge, biologically, economically and politically. Invasive species cross jurisdictional boundaries, making coordination and collaboration critical to success. This Agreement assists in maximizing organizational effectiveness and collaboration on invasive species issues among federal, state, local and tribal governments, private organizations and individuals.

This Agreement is required for any WMG seeking a grant from the Department of Natural Resources pursuant to Subchapter VII of Chapter 47, Wis. Admin. Code.

II. Definitions. All terms and definitions in this Agreement, unless otherwise specified, shall have the same meaning as those terms and definitions in the Weed Management Area Forest Grant Program Application Form 2400-141 (R 4/13) and Subchapter VII of Chapter 47, Wis. Admin. Code.

III. Permission to enter property. The Landowners hereby grants the WMG, its officers, employees and agents permission to enter onto and conduct and monitor the Practices applied for in the attached Weed Management Area Forest Grant Program Application Form 2400-141 (R 4/13) on the properties of Landowners located within the Weed Management Area (WMA) and enter upon the Landowners property listed in this Agreement at reasonable times to conduct Practices applied for under the Weed Management Area Forest Grant Program Application Form 2400-141 (R 4/13).

III. Period of Agreement. The period of this Agreement shall be from _____ to _____. This Agreement may be extended only by written agreement of the parties.

IV. Liability.

With respect to liability to third parties arising out of the performance of this Agreement, on behalf of itself, its officers, directors, members, employees, personnel, agents, representatives and volunteers, the WMG and Landowners (Parties) agrees that each shall be responsible for its own acts and omissions and the results thereof and that it shall not be responsible for the acts or omissions of any other Party, nor the results thereof, to the extent authorized by Wisconsin law. With respect to each other, each Party shall assume the risk and liability to itself, its agents, employees, personnel, and volunteers for any injury to or death of persons or loss or destruction of property resulting in any manner from the conduct of the Party’s own operations and the operations of its officers, directors, employees, personnel, agents, representatives and volunteers under this Agreement.

V. Termination. Any Party may terminate s Agreement upon 1 week’s written notice to the other party.

VI. Authority to Bind. Each person signing this Agreement, personally warrants and represents that he or she is authorized by his or her principal to bind the party for whom he or she is signing.

Weed Management Group

Group Name	Title	
Authorized Signature	Printed Name	Date

Landowners Number 1

Authorized Signature	Printed Name	Title	Date								
County		Township Name(s)		Approximate Acreage							
Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼
N				N				N			

Landowners Number 2

Authorized Signature	Printed Name	Title	Date								
County		Township Name(s)		Approximate Acreage							
Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼
N				N				N			

Landowners Number 3

Authorized Signature	Printed Name	Title	Date								
County		Township Name(s)		Approximate Acreage							
Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼
N				N				N			

Landowners Number 4

Authorized Signature	Printed Name	Title	Date								
County		Township Name(s)		Approximate Acreage							
Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼
N				N				N			

Landowners Number 5

Authorized Signature	Printed Name	Title	Date
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County				Township Name(s)				Approximate Acreage			
Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼	Township	Range E/W	Section	¼ ¼, ¼
N				N				N			